

Have you ever fallen into a fad diet trap? See **B6** for story

Operational expenditures have left city with a mere \$30,000 for capital improvements. See **A3** for full article

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CONVERGING CAMPUS & COMMUNITY

NW MISSOURIAN

THURSDAY
March 1, 2007
V81 / N22
www.nwmissourianews.com

WEEKENDWEATHER

FRIDAY

HI 36
LO 20

SATURDAY

HI 29
LO 14

SUNDAY

HI 38
LO 24



DIVERSITY BILL

The Emily Brooker Intellectual Diversity Act (House Bill 213) passed out of committee at its hearing on Tuesday, Feb. 27.

The act requires public institutions to report annually to the General Assembly showing steps taken to promote intellectual diversity and academic freedom.

As of press time, no calendar date was set for the bill to be heard on the floor.

Pick up the Missourian next week to see a full story on the bill's update.

TODAY

"Glass Menagerie", 7:30 p.m., Mary Linn Performing Arts.

Thursdays at the Union, 10 p.m.

FRIDAY

Last date to get 75 percent refund for dropped second-block courses.

Last date to drop trimester course.

Third scheduled Aladine installment credited.

"Glass Menagerie", 7:30 p.m., Mary Linn Performing Arts.

SATURDAY

KKY Junior High Band Festival.

"Glass Menagerie", 7:30 p.m., Mary Linn Performing Arts.

MONDAY

Intramural court soccer, 6:30 p.m., Student Rec Center.

TUESDAY

District 1 Future Business Leaders of America leadership conference.

www.nwmissourianews.com

Visit the web for:
A slide show and video coverage on Northwest's 9th Annual Drag Show, and results of the men's and women's basketball games.

-CAMPUS DINING

ARAMARK goes trans fat free

By Jessica Schmidt
Managing Editor

Northwest faculty, staff and students can now feel a little better about eating campus dining's fried foods.

ARAMARK, Northwest's food service provider, recently eliminated fryer oil containing trans fats. ARAMARK made the switch after a survey in 2006 found its consumers were increasingly concerned about trans fat consumption.

Scientific evidence shows consumption of trans fat raises "bad cholesterol" levels that increase risks of coronary heart disease, according to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Currently more than 12.5

million Americans have coronary heart disease, and over 500,000 die each year.

The 2006 ARAMARK study revealed that 27 percent of Americans felt strongly about limiting trans fats in meals purchased away from home.

ARAMARK will now use a different cooking oil, Mazola ZT, made from corn and sunflower oils and processed without hydrogenation.

Hydrogenation

produces trans fat when manufacturers add hydrogen to vegetable oil, according to the FDA.

"Overall it's healthier for you," said Barry Beacom, director of campus dining. "It is still fried food

see **TRANS FAT** on A6



ANN GASKILL of JW's works with the new type of oil being used to cut out trans fat in campus foods. "It costs about \$2 more per container so the price is really insignificant," said Kelly Zimmerman, the assistant director of dining services.

While not everyone understands the process of transforming into the opposite gender a few nights a year with the help of sexy outfits, duct tape and elaborate makeup, Northwest's annual Drag Show proves there's...

More than meets the eye



PATRICK HULL, also known as Bianca Bliss (stage name), performs for a room full of viewers during the 8th Annual Drag Show held in the J.W. Jones Student Union Ballroom on Friday night. The show, which served as a fundraiser for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, raised about \$900.

The 8th Annual Drag Show raised more than \$900 to benefit St. Jude Children's Research Hospital

By Stephanie Stangl
Editor in Chief

These outfits left nothing, yet everything, to the imagination. Although most of the seven performers were scantily clad in revealing tops and sexy skirts, they also concealed nearly everything, with the help of razors, make-up, duct tape and saran wrap.

"Sometimes you have a lot to hide, and I'm not talking about dirty little secrets," said host Bianca Bliss, former Northwest student Patrick Hull, joking about how much duct tape he had to use.

Common Ground, Northwest's gay, lesbian and bisexual student organization, hosted its 8th Annual Drag Show 6:30 p.m., Friday, raising \$900 for St. Jude Children's Research Hospital. The hospital helps all children regardless of their ability to pay.

Participants choreographed, performed and lip-synched songs such as "Nasty, Naughty Boy," by

see **DRAG** on A6



KILEY KELLEY, also known as Katinka Kelley (stage name), gets wrapped in duct tape with the help of common ground member Carly Growcock to provide cleavage for his costume for Friday night's 8th Annual Drag Show. This was his third drag show at Northwest.

Author to discuss life as male

By Whitney Keyes
Chief Reporter

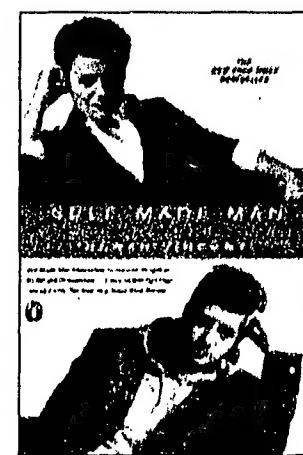
Ned was just a typical guy. He worked, dated women and had a constant 5 o'clock shadow.

But Ned was actually Norah Vincent, a freelance journalist, who had disguised herself as a man.

Vincent will visit Northwest on March 12, to discuss her book, "Self-Made Man." As part of the Distinguished Speakers Series, Vincent will conduct a question and answer session at 3:30 p.m., on Monday, March 12, in the living room area of the student Union, and will speak at 8 p.m. in the Mary Linn Performing Arts Center.

"Self-Made Man," which has been deemed unethical by some, is perhaps one of the most controversial subjects Northwest has had for a speaker. Samantha Coronado, a psychology major, said one of her classes had discussed the ethics involved with Vincent's experiment.

see **MAN** on A6



'Self Made Man'
Norah Vincent

MAP testing to change

By Andrea James
Chief Reporter

A new assessment test is in the works for Missouri schools that will make students more accountable for their scores.

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education announced they are changing the Missouri Assessment Program tests to "end of course" exams, said Jim Morris, Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education director of public information.

"An advisory committee and DESE are working to strengthen and increase minimum graduation requirements and change high school tests," Morris said.

The MAP tests are student achievement tests designed especially for Missouri students, said Vickie Miller, Maryville R-II superintendent. The tests are a way for schools to determine their accreditation.

"The MAP tests are criticized because students don't take them seriously," Miller said.

DESE is exploring different alternatives to encourage more effort, she said. One alternative was the end of course exams for some high school subjects.

Algebra I, English II and Biology, will be the first subjects to use the end of course exams, Morris said. DESE is working toward administering the first tests in 2009.

see **MAP** on A6

CAMPUSBRIEFS

Annual Legislative Reception open to all students

Student Senate's Annual Legislative Reception is Thursday, March 8 in Jefferson City. Students interested can attend an information meeting at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday in Vail 128 or the regular Student Senate meeting at 7 p.m. on Tuesday in the J.W. Jones Student Union Boardroom. Anyone interested can also contact the Student Senate Office at 562-1218.

ISO Dinner to be held Saturday

The International Students Organization annual dinner is at 3 p.m. Saturday in the J.W. Jones Student Union Ballroom. Tickets are \$8 for children, \$11 for adults, \$10 for students and seniors. Tickets can be picked at the IIC in the J.W. Jones Student Union.

St. Joseph Symphony to perform in Mary Linn

The Saint Joseph Symphony will perform at 7:30 p.m., Wednesday, in the Mary Linn Performing Arts Center. Guest cellist Ho Ain will also perform. Students attend free. Tickets are \$5 for the general public and can be picked up at the Student Services Desk in the Administration Building.

Choirs come together for Mary Linn concert next week

Northwest's Tower Choir, Iowa's Western Community College Concert Choir and the Kansas City Fine Arts Chorus will perform together at 8 p.m. Tuesday in the Mary Linn Performing Arts Center. The concert is free and open to the public.

Sculptor's work goes on display as part of Visiting Artist Series

Part of Northwest's Visiting Artist Series, the work of sculptor Aristotile Georgiades from the University of Wisconsin-Madison, is on display until Friday, March 30 in the Olive Delucé Fine Arts Building in the first-floor gallery.

Undergraduate student to present research paper

Andrew Swatek, a pre-professional zoology major from St. Louis, will present a research paper during the 21st annual National Conferences on Undergraduate Research in April at the Dominican University of California.

Swatek's work, supervised by biology assistant professor Peter Kondrashov, analyzes the bone surfaces of vertebrates. For his research, Swatek used the biology department's scanning electron microscope, which it received as a gift from Hallmark Cards last year.

After graduating from Northwest this year, Swatek hopes to attend veterinary school.

SAC chooses performers carefully

By Kristin Summers
University Editor

He never imagined the strong turnout the night he spoke in the Charles Johnson Theater in 2006.

Surprised by the large attendance, Gideon Yago, an MTV personality and journalist, spoke at Northwest as one of several speakers sponsored by the Student Activities Council.

SAC brings lecturers, musicians, comedians and other artists on campus for students and the community, said Wesley Miller, lecture chair of SAC.

The council is broken up into several different committees including entertainment, lecturer and concert.

Miller has been the lecture chair for SAC for the last two years and said he does extensive research when looking for a lecturer to bring to campus.

Lecturers sponsored by SAC are also funded by its budget and Northwest students yearly student activities fee of \$70. Though the lectures are free, the cost of hosting a lecture on campus varies from \$1,000 to \$100,000, Miller said.

Lecturers Judy Shepard, anti-gay violence advocate, and Gideon Yago both cost close to \$100,000, Miller said.

He tries to find speakers that would appeal to students and the community and could also relate with what is taught in some classes at Northwest, Miller said.

After SAC announced Hinder, a rock band, were going to perform in April, anti-Hinder groups formed on Facebook, an online social network.

Though Miller said SAC tries to please the students as much as possible, he knows they can't.

Prices for lecturers sponsored by SAC are similar to prices for bringing as part of the Distinguished Lecture Series. Depending on the speaker, prices for the Distinguished Lecture Series vary from \$3,000 to \$100,000, which is funded through the Provost Office, said Kristen Alley, director of campus activities.

Northwest has never spent \$100,000 for a speaker before, Alley said.

Speakers chosen to be part of the lecture series are booked one to two years in advance, especially if they have a book or movie coming out, Alley said.

Booking a speaker a year in advance can be cheaper if they are nearby, said Richard Frucht, professor in the history, humanities, philosophy and political science department.

A faculty committee meets once or twice a year and makes their recommendations for speakers to Alley, Frucht said, who is on the faculty committee.

Speakers are important because they provide insight through their expertise, Alley said.

"It exposes us to some people with expert real world experience that we don't get in Maryville," Alley said.

Shepard speaks of injustice, encourages acceptance of all

By Andrea James
Chief Reporter

A hush fell over the audience as she walked onto the stage. Some were there for class credit, while others were eager to hear her message of love, truth and political justice for those who are different.

Judy Shepard spoke Tuesday, Feb. 27, at Charles Johnson Theater on society's injustice towards the gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender population.

During her presentation, she spoke of Wyoming, the inequities in our culture regarding homosexuals, her son Matthew Shepard's life and murder and her victim impact statement to a Wyoming court. A victim impact statement is a statement that tells the court what was lost because of the crime.

The audience was informed Judy believes our society has become SILENT—silent, indifferent and complacent. She asked the crowd to question the justification of sitting back while others have to endure the loss of jobs or not be able to marry the person they love because they are different.

The audience came from several places

and for different reasons to hear Judy speak. University of Nebraska-Lincoln student Sam Fischer drove two and a half hours with his parents to listen to Judy's speech. They wanted to hear her perspective on the issue and about educating others.

Tim Fischer, Sam's father, was interested in how Judy's story still has an impact today.

"Something that happened eight or nine years ago is still being dealt with now. It still hits home and will continue to be powerful eight or nine years from now," Tim said. "It's not just a gay and lesbian issue; it's about accepting everyone. Obviously our generation didn't do that."

On Oct. 7, 1998, two men unmercifully attacked Matthew, beat him and left him to die eighteen hours later, a cyclist found him. On Oct. 12, 1998, Matthew died from his injuries.

After Matthew's death, Judy tried to "make something positive out of something completely devoid of humanity..." She started touring the nation to speak with others about hate crimes and discrimination. When Judy first started, she saw fear in other's eyes and her presentations were

more personal. Now she sees activism and hope and leans more towards the political aspect. Her ultimate goal is to get rid of discrimination altogether.

"My goal is to be out of a job and have everything equal across the board," Judy said. She uses her speeches as a grieving process for Matthew.

"Matt is always with me and this is how I keep him alive. I'm going to miss all the kids when I'm not needed which will be a good thing," Shepard said.

Brandi Malloy and Carmelia Maxwell came from St. Joseph and they also wanted to hear Shepard's message.

Malloy and Maxwell have been partners for the past three years. Malloy is interested in how Judy feels about fear. The women adopted a daughter and each have children of their own; both women are concerned about the wellbeing of their children.

"I'm always concerned that someone will hurt them or kill them because their mothers are lesbians," Malloy said.

She also thinks it is interesting how something so simple as a kiss on the head can cause repulsion from others.

"I liked it when Judy said that God



JUDY SHEPARD, mother of Matthew Shepard, who was killed because of his sexual preference, spoke about political injustice for gay, lesbian, and bisexual individuals. After her speech, she spoke one on one with individuals who needed advice for their own personal lives.

didn't make mistakes and wants all his children to be loved. God didn't make me different to be hated," Malloy said.

For more information on Judy and Matthew Shepard and the Matthew Shepard Foundation, go to Matthewshepard.org.

COMMUNITY

Dancers boogie to regionals

By Lindsay Jacobs
Staff Features Editor

Some have asked if the dance studio is a trophy store, an easy misconception considering the great amount of trophies crowding the window and the talent inside.

Bearcat Boogie Dance Studio has been open for five years, and this will be the studio's third year of participating in competitions giving them plenty of chances to bring home awards.

Their success got them invited to perform during the half time of the Capital One Bowl in Orlando. Around 20 performers and their families will fly out the day after Christmas to perform on New Year's Day 2008. They will have three days to learn the routine.

During their second year of competition, Bearcat Boogie Dance Studio received several prestigious awards at the national competition in Branson, Mo.

In order to get to the national competition a dance must win at the regional competition in Omaha, Neb., said Dana Schmidt, owner of Bearcat Boogie Dance Studio.

Their success at nationals is ranked in her top five moments in life, Schmidt said.

The first year nothing made it to nationals, but last year all 22 dances made it to nationals. At nationals, nine dances won national championships, 10 dances received first place and six dances took second place.

"It was gratifying to me to see the excitement on the kids' faces," Schmidt said.

Dancers at the studio must be asked to participate in competition. In order to be asked, performers must have a good stage presence, be dedicated and willing to learn.

This year they're taking 36 performers to dance in 40 dances to the regional competition in Omaha on March 23, 24 and 25. There are 20 solos and 20 group



FIVE AND 6-year-old girls practice their tap dance routine to the tune of "Hi Ho" Tuesday night at Bearcat Boogie Dance Studio. This age group doesn't compete, but is being trained to carry on the winning tradition of the dancers at this Maryville studio.

dances going to regionals.

There are currently 182 dancers enrolled in the studio, the number of performers enrolled doubled after nationals last year, Schmidt said.

Kaylee Nelson, 14, has been taking lessons at Bearcat Boogie for five years. She has spent 11 years taking dance lessons.

Last year her solo placed fifth overall at nationals, she won the Energy Award and the tap performance she was in placed first overall.

The success makes her want to keep dancing "the rest of my life," Nelson said.

This year at regionals she is participating in two jazz groups, a jazz duo, a hip-hop solo, a tap group, a pom-pom

group and a hip-hop group.

Bailey Schmidt, 11, has taken lessons at Bearcat Boogie for five years, and she has been enrolled in lessons since she was 3-years-old.

Last year at nationals, her clogging duo received fifth-place overall. She was also a solo category winner, and her tap trio and hip-hop trio won second.

At regionals this year she is participating in a hip-hop group, a tap duo, a clogging duo and solo, a pom-pom group, a group production and a trio mix.

Christi Nance, 13, has been competing for two years and has taken lessons at Bearcat Boogie for the past four years. She began taking lessons at the age of 4 or 5.

Last year at nationals her tap duo ranked sixth, her pom-pom group received first place along with judge's choice.

Bailey and Nelson were also in that group and the production routine that also involved Bailey and Nelson won a national championship and the award for technical timing.

This year at regionals Nance is doing a hip-hop group, a mixed trio, a pom-pom group, production and a jazz solo. She spends six hours at the dance studio every Sunday, Nance said.

Dana said the success comes from the dancers maturing.

"Our girls continue to get better every year and haven't stopped learning," she said.

New skate park in future

By Marcus Meade
Community News Editor

They ride the streets and travel hundreds of miles for a few hours of hell on wheels. But soon, they'll be able to stay right here at home.

The skate park designated for Donaldson West Side Park and Sports Complex is nearing construction.

"The parents came to us originally wanting a safe place for kids to ride their skate boards," said Rod Auxier, Maryville Parks and Recreation director. "Then, the people cracking down up town, at the pool, on the tennis courts and on the University, everybody was trying to move them somewhere else."

The parents that went to see Auxier then began raising money for the project.

"They have been instrumental in helping getting the funds to build it," Auxier said.

One of those parents, David Nun has been very active in the pursuit of this skate park, Auxier

said.

Nun's reasons for wanting this park revolve around his son Jerad's love of skate boarding. That love and the kids' knowledge of skate parks is what prompted Nun and Auxier to give the kids the designer's pen, Nun said. A group of 10 to 12 kids designed the layout for the new skate park.

"Before he drove, we were gone every weekend taking him to skateboard," Nun said.

It's been two years since this group of parents got together, and in that two years, they have raised \$116,110, Nun said. That's roughly \$19,000 short of the amount needed.

"We lucked out last year," Nun said. "The skateboard company Woodward came to us, they had some 2006 equipment they were willing to sell us."

Before this project began the committee of parents wanted to make sure the need was there for a skate park, Nun said. They sent out a petition asking people whether they thought Maryville needed a skate park and whether or not

it would be used. Roughly 400 people signed the petition with an estimated 100 saying they would use the park.

"Right now there's probably a good core of 20 to 25 skateboarders of the high school age," Nun said.

He envisions Maryville being a place where not only high school kids can skate, but younger kids and people from the surrounding areas as well.

The park will be available for both skate boarders and in-line skaters, but not bikers, due to the physical restrictions of the equipment, Nun said.

Both Auxier and Nun expect the park to be ready sometime this spring.

A raffle is being held to help raise the additional \$19,000 needed for the park.

The winner will receive a trip for two to Camp Woodward, a camp with ramps and rails for skate boarding, in-line skating and biking.

For more details contact Auxier at 562-2923.

Maryville short on money for changes

By Marcus Meade
Community News Editor

Maryville may soon find itself up a creek without the money for paddles.

The city of Maryville has been experiencing a stagnant period in city revenue over the last couple of years, said Assistant City Manager Matthew LeClerc. That lack of money means the city's capital improvements aren't being made for Maryville's different departments.

"Each fiscal year they'll put an item or a number of items of things that each department needs," LeClerc said. "We are in a position right now where the revenue we have that's being generated is only allowing us to do basic operational needs. Unfortunately, due to the lack of revenue that we have it's not enabling us to meet these capital improvement plans."

The city of Maryville has total revenues of roughly \$12.9 million. After subtracting the operational expenditure total of more than \$12.8 million, that leaves the city with only \$30,000 for improvements. The improvements needed cost an estimated \$9.5 million.

The improvements could be things like code enforcement-tracking software or water service upgrades. But regardless of what the improvement is, LeClerc said, all things requested are things departments need.

While things at home, like the city's sluggish sales tax, greatly affect Maryville's ability to make improvements, the global economy plays its part as well, said Mayor Mike Thompson.

"Costs have increased significantly, fuel. Katrina really hurt us on some projects we were doing," Thompson said. "We went from a gallon of gasoline being about \$1.80 up to \$3...a piece of plywood went

from \$4 a sheet to \$20 a sheet over for improvements. The improvements needed cost an estimated \$9.5 million."

Lack of funds from sales tax and elsewhere means asking for funds from the federal government.

"Obviously every city in Missouri...is asking a state rep. for some sort of appropriation," LeClerc said. "With that said, obviously not everybody's going to get their request."

Even if the appropriations come through, they're only a temporary fix, LeClerc said.

Fixing the problem in the long term will take a mixture of new businesses and a higher population that can supply more disposable income. This trend doesn't worry Thompson, however.

"Does it concern me? Absolutely. Do I worry about it? No, that wouldn't serve a lot of purpose," he said.

Maryville is left with only \$30,000 for improvements after subtracting operational expenditures.

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Forensics team named state champions at William Jewell

By Shane Sherwood
Missouri Reporter

March 1, 2007. This was the first win for Northwest since 1998.

On Feb. 17 and 18, a group of 12 participants from the forensics team traveled to William Jewell College for the state championship. The results were a big win for the team, becoming state champions for the first time in eight years.

"I was really happy with the way our team was able to come together and win state," Alison Nickolaus said, forensics team member.

Directed by Johnson, the forensics team consists of 14 members and is open to any student at the University.

Northwest won in the team division, with three individuals winning in their own divisions. Steve Perkins achieved in dramatic interpretation

division. Nickolaus was successful for her informative speech performance. Matthew Sidesinger scored for his speech in the after dinner speaking division.

"I was really surprised I won informative," Nickolaus said. "I really didn't think the round went all that well, but apparently I did something right."

Students prepared for their speeches by individual rehearsal and practice. They also met with Johnson, Meri Decker, the assistant director or Brent Pankau, the graduate assistant. Also, the week before competition, practices were held almost every night until late.

Along with the University, 12 other Missouri colleges and universities participated in the event. The University took the highest honor, the state champions, which was the first win in this category since 1998.

Johnson described this year's forensics team as successful. He also believes that forensics is an important asset for a student.

"People who compete often have stronger critical thinking skills that can attribute to any field or job," Johnson said. "It also helps students improve their communication skills through public performance in a competitive setting."

Decker said the team is doing very well and that the team has put in a lot of effort for the team this year.

On March 3 and 4, the forensics team will compete at the University of Oklahoma in Norman. If they win there, they will compete in the national forensics competition at Minnesota State University in Mankato.

If anyone would like more information about becoming a forensics team member, contact Johnson at 562-1506.

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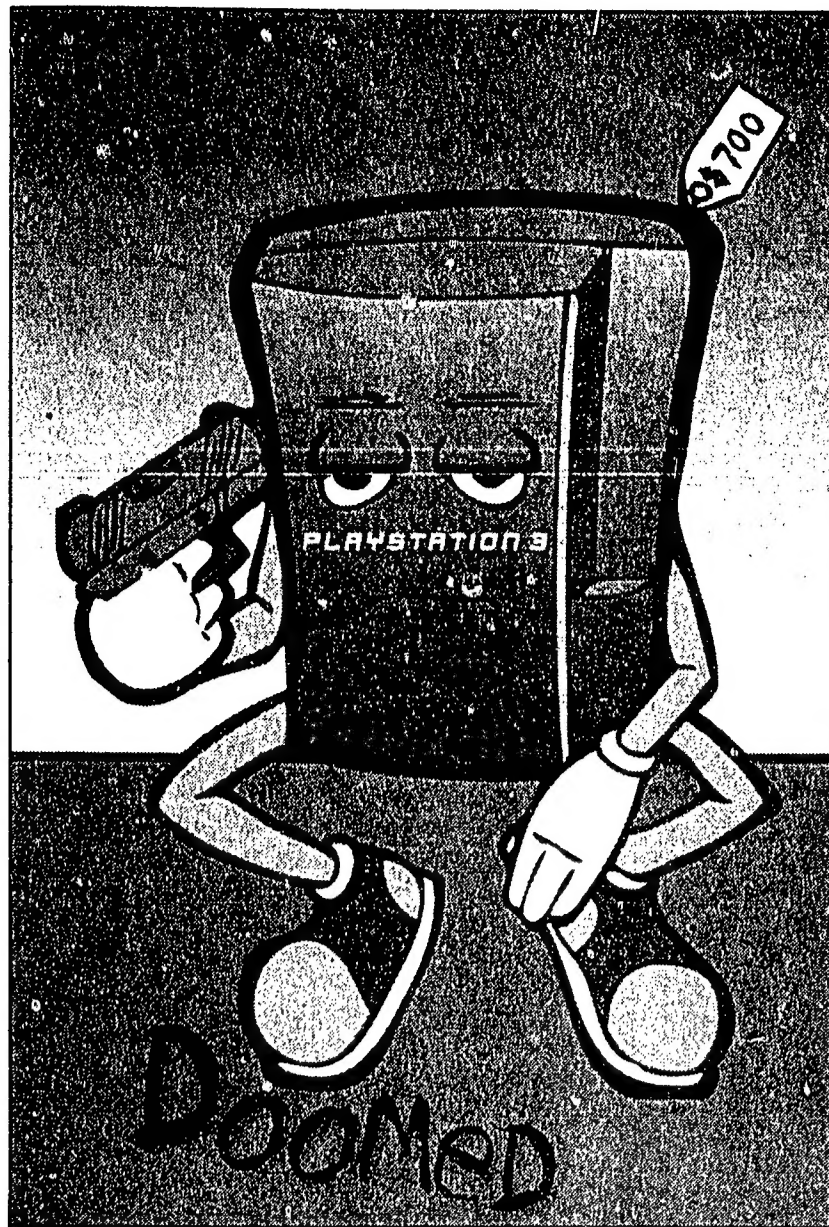
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OURVIEW

Try exercise, healthy eating on for size

Sometimes it's not so great to be an American. American restaurants serve one person enough food for a starving family of four, our borders house one of the largest obesity rates in the world and most of us are always looking for the easy way out when it comes to weight loss.

Instead of exercising regularly and eating a balanced meal, many of us opt to pop TrimSpa or Hydroxycut or jump on the bandwagon of the Grapefruit Diet or Atkins.

Numerous deaths have been linked to dietary supplements boasting weight loss benefits and the secrets are out: you can't live on grapefruit alone and your brain needs—gasp—carbohydrates to function.

Americans constantly hunt for the greatest results with the minimal amount of effort. Let's face it. Most of us are lazy and we don't want to admit that maybe we need to actually get off the couch and play with our kids once in a while or take a walk instead of surfing the Internet eight hours a day.

Also, an important factor to keep in mind when deciding whether to jog or swallow another fist full of pills is dietary supplements are not regulated by the Food and Drug Administration, meaning they could have severe consequences to your health and you'd never know it until it's too late.

You wouldn't chow down on a Lean Cuisine that hadn't been approved by the FDA, so why would you blindly consume pills everyday that could kill you?

We've all heard many of our friends and family members try diet after diet they saw on an infomercial at 2 a.m. Sometimes they lose 30 or 40 pounds, and we start to think, hey, if it worked for them, it could work for me. But the problem with fad diets is the results only last typically the longevity of the diet, and then you gain all the weight back—plus a few pounds.

It's time to stand up and make a decision about the kind of life you want to lead. Do you want to go through life feeling lethargic, unattractive and risk multiple health disorders? Or do you want to gradually try fitting exercise into your hectic schedule and try to eat healthier, not because of vanity reasons, but to feel better, be healthier and live a longer life?

Turn to The Vibe this week on B6 to learn more about the dangers of fad diets and to get some tips on eating healthier and living better, because there's no day better than today to start living healthier for you.

MYVIEW

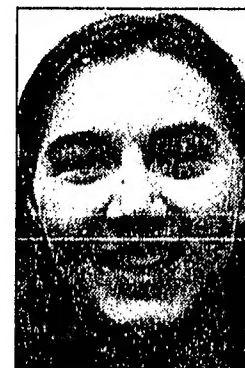
Reporter aims to cast educated vote

It's almost March, and I have a new New Year's resolution. I know, I know, it's a little late, but I'm justifying that, because I'm a little ahead of schedule with this goal.

I want to understand, follow and make an educated vote come the next Presidential election.

Let me back track slightly. I am part of that group that gives teenagers a bad reputation regarding politics. I have no idea what's going on. I was that girl, in high school Civics, who didn't actually pay attention. No, I was too busy discussing where to venture for lunch with my friends—Taco Bell hands down.

Nice job, Whitney. Am I really



Whitney Keyes
Chief Reporter

so shallow that I would postpone knowledge of my country until I get my Nachos Bell Grande?

Don't get me wrong. I see the headlines when I log onto the Internet to check my Facebook. I know Britney shaved her head, and that Lorelei on Gilmore Girls isn't married anymore. But in the grand scheme of things, who cares? I don't want to be so shallow that I only fill myself in on celebrities and TV shows.

I am ashamed, and embarrassed to say that, I am totally clueless.

Like I said though, I do have an opinion. And I've been an advocate for voting since I was old enough to understand the concept

of democracy. I think voting is great; I just apparently can't be bothered with knowing anything important.

"Daddy, how do we feel about President Bush?" was my old way of filling myself in. I've asked this enough now, that my dad knows I want the Readers Digest version of politics. He's my almighty source for all things government. I registered as a Democrat...why? Because that's what Daddy is. But that isn't going to cut it anymore.

At least not for me. So now that presidential bids and campaigns are starting, I'm setting my bar high, and not settling for not knowing what's going on.

I'm not going to vote against Hillary just because my dad says she'll ruin the country. And I'm not going to vote according to party lines only to be true to my

voter registration card. Nope, not this time. Watch out guys, I intend to be informed.

And I encourage those of you dad-asking, Taco Bell-eating, clueless people to join me. Let's make a change for the better, by putting forth a little effort. It won't hurt us that much will it? This is our country, and I'm not foreseeing a giant exodus of our generation to Canada, so let's take that extra step to take care of it. It's the least we can do, for maybe the most important thing.

I'm not saying all teenagers are uninformed and clueless like I am. In fact, I'd hope to be the only one. I doubt I am though. Those of you who do show some effort and care, help us lowly naive people out. And let's all get a head start on next year's election, so that we can make a difference.

But first, let's go get some tacos.

MYVIEW

Tornadoes bring good with the bad

You know you're in Missouri when...there is a tornado watch in February.

On Saturday I did a little double take as I caught a glimpse of the TV screen.

Maybe I'm a little sadistic but despite all the damage, destruction and heartache they cause, I can't help but feel a little excited. Tornado season is one of my favorite times of the year in the Midwest.

Something about a freakishly green sky, rapidly dropping temperatures and rotating clouds gets my heart racing. I've seen about three tornadoes in person.

There are probably a few reasons I'm infatuated with tornadoes. But I honestly believe they bring some comic relief with all the destruction.

For one, tornadoes bring out the crazy in people.

Example, for five years I worked at the Dairy Queen in my hometown and each summer some idiot would come through the drive-thru while the sirens were going off.

"Hey are you guys serving?"



Jessica Schmidt
Managing Editor

"No, we're not. There's a tornado on the ground. That's why the sirens are going off."

"Ahhh man. Seriously? Can I just get a Blizzard?"

I never failed to be amazed at how desensitized residents of my hometown are to severe weather. Maybe they're OK with dying as long as their last meal is a tasty DQ treat.

No, 2, tornadoes bring people and families together. This doesn't have to be all bad. I've met a lot of people helping with cleanups and heard more than a few unbelievable survival stories.

My family is a perfect example of how not to react to severe weather.

Just a year ago on Easter weekend I experienced one of the more adventurous family bonding moments. It was a normal Saturday until—gasp—a tornado formed a mile west of our house. One thing's for sure, when there is a tornado near the Schmidt house, we go on high alert.

I don't know too many other families who have mastered the almost comical, severe-weather ritual. In fact, growing up in Tornado Alley, I think we've perfected it to an art form.

Once the siren on our weather radio goes off my family goes into three different stages.

During stage one mom looks worried and hovers near the TV, dad stares at the sky standing outside—preferably as close to the danger area as possible, while my brother and I find a middle ground on the front porch.

During stage two, dad attempts to act like he knows what is happening. Usually he drops phrases like "look at that wall cloud," or "wow that's a super cell," to try and look like the family meteorologist.

Stage two ends with an abrupt "get in the house those clouds are rotating."

Usually stage three is "head for the basement," but on this particular Saturday stage three became "let's run away from the tornado."

Yeah, I'm a member of that family, the family who runs away from a visible tornado.

So we drove 70-80 mph on gravel back roads away from our farm, me clutching my cat and my brother cussing out my parents for deciding to leave.

In case you're wondering, yes the winds out in front of a tornado are stronger than those near it. I was pretty amazed that we didn't blow away once we hit the dust-filled river bottoms.

If that wasn't crazy enough, my neighbor's story topped it. Anyone who has lived near tornado activity knows someone who has one of these stories. You know that one crazy neighbor who decided to out run the thing (my family) or the other one who rode it out in his truck.

My neighbor's friend, ironically named Radar, was driving to his home while the tornado was on the ground.

Despite seeing the tornado he continued on, and actually ran out of gas with the tornado is literally 50 feet away. So the tornado comes, spins his truck around a few times, then passes on leaving only a few dents and scratches.

Radar survives this encounter and I can only assume he spent the rest of his Easter weekend bragging how he survived one of Mother Nature's most dangerous storms.

Stories like that are just too good to be fiction.

I can't wait for tornado season.

COMMENTS FROM NWMISSOURIANNEWS.COM

In response to "O'Grady leads way in victory"

Michelle
Posted 2/25/07

I saw the game against Fort Hays on Feb. 24 and Katie O'Grady was on fire along with some of our other team members. I know that that team will miss her when she leaves this year. I also went to the Bearcats basketball camp and she was there so I got to meet her. It was pretty cool.
GO CATS!!!

In response to "Editor displeased with snow removal"

Maryville citizen
Posted 2/15/07

I challenge you to spend one day as a Maryville Street Crew worker. While you are safe and warm at your house, thinking about whether or not you will have school the next day, or fast asleep, street department crews are out all night long, attempting to clean the roads as the snow continues to fall. I thank the street crews for making it possible to drive in this town following a storm, at the hard work they do, the lack of sleep they get. They are

often taken for granted!

LaRee
Posted 2/21/07

I read your editorial, knowing that you must be a younger person and think that the world revolves around you, but I received the phone call from the University at 4 a.m. for my husband to drive 15 miles into Maryville to push snow at the University. He was gone before 4:30 a.m. He had no problems scooping the snow off his car and driving on Highway 71 to get there. Maybe age is a reason, maybe he knew that it was

slick or maybe he just has way more knowledge on how to drive in Missouri. He did not get home that day until after 5 p.m., so he was working from 4:40 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., 12 hours, and then you complain. It's time to grow up and put on the big girl panties now.

Post comments on any article or column online at
www.nwmissourianews.com

SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Jan. 9
■Worth subject reported someone had stolen items from his residence, which is under construction

Feb. 3
■Pickering subject reported identity theft

Feb. 13
■John Pitts, 32, Marium, was arrested for non-support

Feb. 15
■William McElroy, 20, Burlington Jct., was arrested for failure to appear

Feb. 16
■Tony Cox, 27, Roeland Park, was arrested for driving while revoked

Feb. 17
■Officers reported to a domestic call in Guilford
■Maryville subject reported a burglary at a business in Maryville.
■Officers responded to a burglary at the North Nodaway School in Hopkins

Feb. 20
■St. Joseph subject reported burglary to a property in Burlington Jct.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Feb. 16
■Lost or stolen property, ongoing investigation, 700 block S. Main
■Failure to stop for school bus, ongoing investigation, 2000 block N. Main

Feb. 17
■Larceny from a business, ongoing investigation, 700 block S. Main

Feb. 20
■Laron D. Council, 20, Maryville, receiving stolen goods, 900 block College Ave.
■Harvey R. Alexander, Jr., 21, Kansas City, failure to appear, 400 block N. Market

Feb. 21
■Charles A. Haynes, 24, Maryville, no valid driver's license, failure to maintain financial responsibility, 600

block N. Saunders
■Dallas J. Flynn, 22, Maryville, driving while suspended, equipment violation, 300 block W. Seventh

■Andrew L. Greiner, 22, Omaha, DWI, equipment violation, 100 block W. Ninth

■Jason L. Wilmes, 35, Skidmore, exceeded posted speed limit, 200 block N. Country Club

■Derek A. Anderson, 17, St. Joseph, disorderly conduct, 1600 block S. Main

Feb. 22
■Second-degree burglary, ongoing investigation, 300 block E. Eighth

Feb. 23
■Andrew C. Schoeneck, 20, Maryville, MIP, 200 block E. Halsey

■Terry D. Colvin, 19, Maryville, DWI, driving while suspended, failure to display lighted headlights, 100 block S. Dewey

■First-degree property damage, ongoing investigation, 300 block Larry Lane

■Lost or stolen plates, ongoing investigation, 1900 block Walton Bend

Feb. 25
■Spencer A. McGinness, 18, Maryville, MIP, 100 block N. Vine

■Kevin B. Hiatt, 19, Maryville; Chad Winters, 20, Maryville; Anthony Davidson, 20, Maryville; Josh Thurman, 19, Maryville, permitting a peace disturbance, 200 block E. First

■Michael P. Wilmes, 29, Lees Summit, driving while suspended, 1200 block E. Third

■Michele R. Hastings, 23, Maryville, driving while suspended, failure to stop at posted stop sign, 1600 block N. College Dr.

Feb. 26
■Travis E. Carroll, 23, Maryville, failure to appear, 400 block N. Market

Feb. 27
■John Coffey, Harrisonville, code violation, 600 block N. Main

ACCIDENTS

Feb. 14
■Christopher J. Woodland, 20, Maryville, collided with Teresa J.

Hayes, 31, Maryville. Woodland was cited for careless and imprudent driving.

Feb. 19
■Adeleah V. Denham, Maryville, and Katie L. Harmon, Maryville, collided in the 700 block of W. Fourth St. Denham was cited for failure to yield from a stop sign and Harmon was cited for failure to show proof of insurance.

Feb. 20
■Jamie L. Grimes, 43, Bolckow, and Wanda S. Bloom, 45, Conception Jct., collided at E. South Avenue and Business Hwy. 71.

Feb. 23
■Daniel L. Street, 21, Maryville, and Nicholas J. Wray, 25, Pickering, collided at E. Third and N. Newton. Street was cited for careless and imprudent driving.

OBITUARIES

Margeory "Marge" Lemley Sumner, 94, died Monday, Feb. 26, 2007 at the Carriage Square Health Care Center.

Born Dec. 14, 1912, in Whitesville, Mo., she was the daughter of the late Elmer & Rachel (Murry) Wiley.

She was preceded in death by her first husband, Herman H. Lemley and her second husband, Emory Sumner.

She was a homemaker. She is survived by her caretaker and special friend, Marjorie K. Violett and husband Bill, St. Joseph, stepson, Darryl Sumner, High Point, N.C., sister, Fern Paxton, Kansas City, Kan., brother, George Wiley, Savannah, Okla. She is survived by many nieces and nephews.

Graveside services will be held at 11 a.m. on Friday, March 2, at the Darlington Cemetery, Darlington, Mo. There will be no formal visitation but friends may call between the hours of 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. on Thursday at the Danfelt Funeral Home.

Judy Jean (Newton) Flynn, 73, St. Joseph died Monday, Feb. 26, 2007 at Heartland Regional Medical Center, St. Joseph.

She was born Aug. 10, 1933 in Skidmore, Mo., the daughter of Myron and Jessie (Dawson) Newton.

She was a graduate of Skidmore High School and married Robert Flynn Jan. 1, 1974 in Skidmore.

A retired cook for the St. Joseph State Hospital, Judy was a member of the Skidmore Christian Church, Skidmore.

She was preceded in death by her husband; Robert Flynn (Nov. 20, 2002); parents brothers: Homer, R.G. "Zeke," George, Myron and Fred Newton and sisters: Beth Bonner, Dixie Collin and Leona Newton.

Survivors include her brother: James "Hooker" Newton, Skidmore; and sisters: Mary Johnson, Skidmore; Lou Diggs, Skidmore and Inez Boyer, St. Joseph; nieces and nephews.

Judy's body was cremated and a memorial service will be held later in the year.

Ashley Nichole Dew, 6, of Pickering, died Thursday, Feb. 22, 2007 at the St. Francis Hospital, Maryville.

Born on Dec. 6, 2000 in Kansas City, she was the daughter of Garry Allan and Tina Ann Dew of Pickering.

She was a kindergarten student at the North Nodaway R-6 Elementary School, Pickering.

Ashley loved playing with her sister Emily and friends, purple was her favorite color and she loved pigs, especially "Piggy" and her cat "Sally."

In addition to her parents, she is survived by her loving twin sister Emily Rose Dew, of the home, paternal grandparents, Larry and Carolyn Dew, Pickering, maternal grandparents, Jay and Dyanne Rozema, Hamilton, Ohio, maternal great grandmother, Jean Gibbs, Cincinnati, Ohio. Uncles and aunts, Troy Dew, Kansas City, Scott and Angela Dew, Smithville, Darin and Holly Mills, Linden, Iowa, Stefany Prindle, Hamilton, cousins, Alexis Prindle and Ava Mills.

Funeral services were held Tuesday, Feb. 27, at the First Presbyterian Church. Final resting place will be in the Miriam Cemetery, Maryville.

The family has requested the omission of flowers and that memorial donations in Ashley's name be made to the Ronald McDonald House or the North Nodaway Elementary School Success Program.

SCHOOL NEWS

Local students make 'change'

By Nichole Unger
Missourian Reporter

Local students and teachers are raising money for a disease that plagues people nationwide and right at home.

Maryville Middle School students have been participating in "Pennies for Patients," raising money for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society.

Since a fellow student and teacher have both suffered from a form of the disease, Maryville Middle School Principal Kevin Pitts decided to go ahead with the program.

"It doesn't take a lot of time but is something that will hopefully make a difference," Pitts said.

The program ran from Feb. 5 through Feb. 23. Students at the middle schools were divided into multiple advisory classes, consisting of 12-15 students. Each advisory class was responsible for collecting their own money.

Each day the students would bring in their money and turn it into their advisory teacher.

"It was really fun for the kids. They would get to graph out the change each day on the Coin-O-Meter using highlighters and different colors," Sixth-grade teacher Kerry Wilmes said.

Not only does this teach stu-

dents to do some good and raise money for a good cause, it also teaches them math skills. The students were responsible for counting their own money each day.

Paper money, checks and change were all accepted from the students. Each day after the students had graphed out their amount, a student would take the change and dump it into a huge bucket in the office. Office assistants also brought in their spare change to dump in the bucket. This was a school wide project.

The office counted up and announced which class had collected the most money on Tuesday, that way students had three days to try to beat the other advisory classes that were closest to their total.

Eighth grader Dylan Feighert is in one of the classes that were ahead as of last Tuesday. Feighert's advisory class had collected \$170.

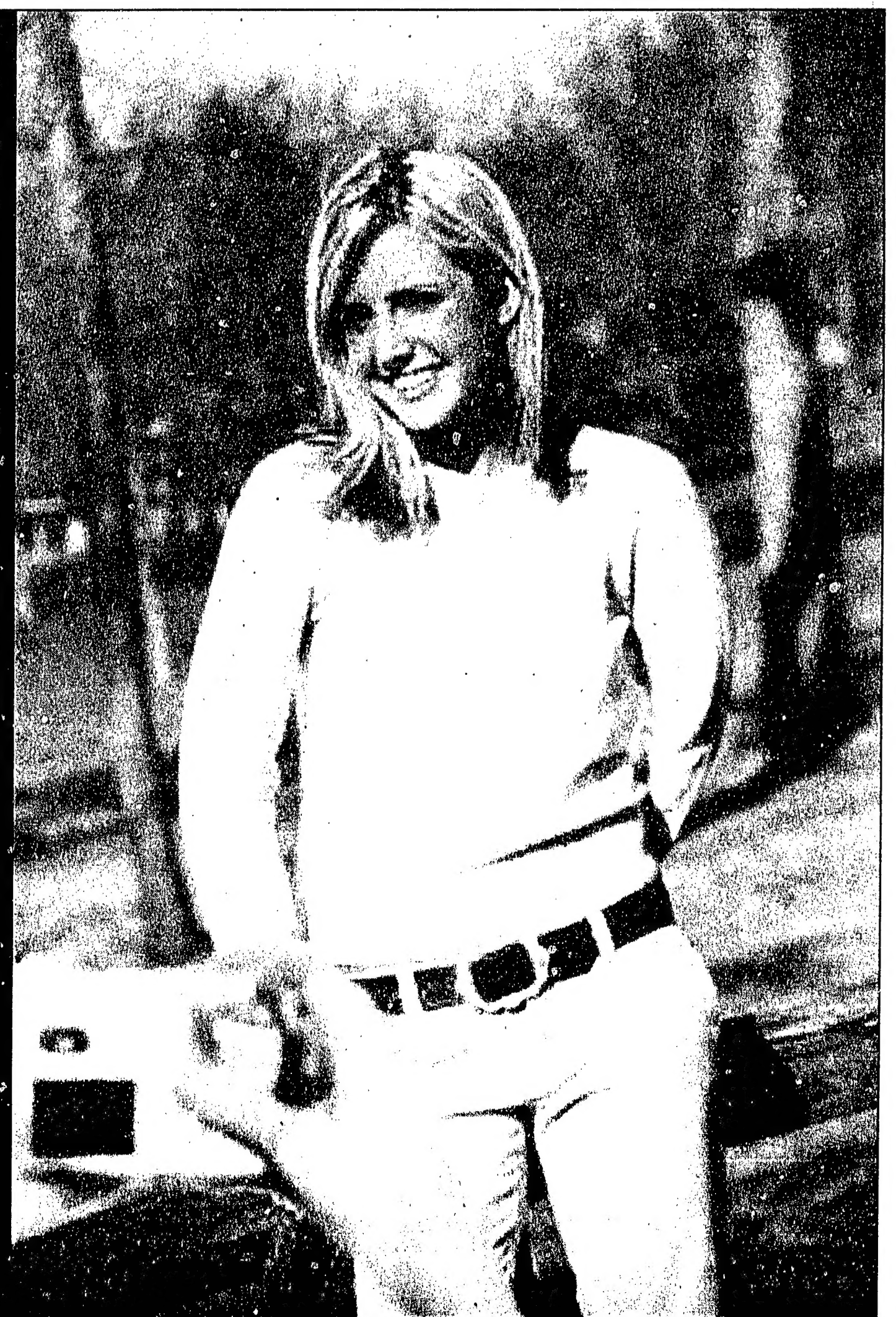
"It was really exciting to see how much money we had raised," said Feighert.

The two winning classes and the grand total collected will be announced Thursday, March 4, at the Character Assembly. The last time they counted the totals, they were just under \$800. The two winning classes will get a pizza party together in appreciation for all their hard work.

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ATTENTION

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CAMPUSTALK

What do you think about fad diets?

"It's a quick way to lose weight, but as soon as you stop the weight comes back,"
Amber Barr
Dixieville

"I think they are awesome,"
Adrian Latall
Bick-ay/psychology

"You have to work out for any diet to work,"
Stacey Herzog
Speech Communication

"No diets work for me,"
Vandrea Fox
Athletic Coaching

"They are stupid and pointless,"
Karyl Stewart
Elementary Education

DRAG: Common Ground hosts show to raise money, awareness



KILEY KELLEY, also known as Kalinka Kelley (stage name), gets his makeup done before the beginning of Friday night's drag show held in the J.W. Jones Student Union Ballroom. There were a total of seven performers that danced and lip-synched to chosen songs.

continued from A1

Christina Aguilera, and "Survivor," by Destiny's Child, in a nearly sold-out show.

One Northwest student and Common Ground president, Coby Shepard, performed and while the rest of the performers were professional drag queens from St. Joseph. During each number, audience members were encouraged to tip additional proceeds for St. Jude's.

Many of the performers dress in drag as a way to explore another identity for even just a few nights a year.

"It's fun pretending to be someone else," said Kiley Kelley, who goes by the stage name Katinka Kelley and Missouri Western State University student. "You can be a huge bitch."

Common Ground also provided information on safer sex and oral HIV tests, as well as door prizes from Beach Tanning and Wal-Mart's Smart Style Salon.

Common Ground member Rachel Brooks helped with the drag show every year she's been at Northwest and loves the camaraderie the event promotes.

"It gives us a sense of unity," Brooks said. "It shows we are all the same and accepted."

Rachel Brooks, Common Ground member

to support the gay, lesbian and bisexual community at Northwest and to see friends perform.

"It's a big thing a lot of people have never been to and it can be a culture shock," Rosson said. "It's a way to clear up a lot of the bad stereotypes that are out there about this type of thing."

Common Ground also provided information on safer sex and oral HIV tests, as well as door prizes from Beach Tanning and Wal-Mart's Smart Style Salon.

MAN: Freelance journalist to discuss controversial experiment

continued from A1

"I think it's not exactly fair, but it's a good experiment to be done," Coronado said. "It makes people think." Coronado is planning to attend Vincent's lecture.

Vincent has also written for *The New York Times*, *The Village Voice* and *The New Republic*. Immediately prior to her year in disguise, she was a nationally syndicated opinion columnist for the *Los Angeles Times*.

According to the first chapter of her book, she was inspired to disguise herself, and wrote the novel based on a prior experience in drag.

A friend, who had been dressing up as a man for years, dared Vincent to join her. She showed the author how to make facial hair by cutting off small, unnoticeable parts of her own hair.

It was this first time in drag, in New York City, where Vincent discovered one major difference when she walked down the street as a man. As a woman, she was frequently stared down by men on stoops and in doorways, when walking on the sidewalk.

However, as a man, the same people would make eye contact, and then look away. This change in respect was partially what motivated Vincent.

"After the whole incident had blown over, I started thinking that if in such a short time in drag I had learned such an important secret about the way males and females communicate with each other, and about the unspoken codes of male experience, then couldn't I potentially observe much more about the social differences between the sexes if I passed as a man for a much longer period of time?" wrote Vincent in her book.

Even though this idea intrigued Vincent, she wasn't brave enough to act upon it. But after watching a reality show where contestants paraded as the opposite sex and failed, she decided to go for it. So in 2003, she gave herself some facial hair, a crew cut and glasses, and became Ned.

Brittanie Martin, a psychology major who also plans on attending the event, said she is excited to hear Vincent's story. Though it may be controversial, she said it was good to inform people on what Vincent has learned.

"College isn't just about education, it's about experience," Martin said.

More information can be found on Vincent's Web site, norahvincent.net, or by contacting the Campus Activities Office at 562-1226.

MAP: Missouri public schools to require new test as exit exam

continued from A1

The primary benefit of the tests includes clarity in content and expectations for tests and greater clarity for teachers to prepare their students, he said.

Maryville educators knew a change was coming, said Janet Jelavich, Maryville High School English department chair. However, they thought that the ACT was going to replace MAP tests.

"Most people were surprised on Feb. 20 when the state announced that they were having end of course exams. It will be interesting to see

what it will be like two years from now," Jelavich said.

Many people were unhappy with MAP tests, she said. There are no incentives for students to do well on the tests, so the schools had to create their own.

Maryville High School created a popcorn and movie party as an incentive for their students, she said. If students do well on the test, they will get popcorn and a movie one afternoon a week, every week after the test. The faculty look at the rough drafts of the "performance essays" to decide who gets to participate.

Some of the incentives of the end of course exams will include the test counting as 10 percent of a student's grade; however, they don't know yet if it will count towards 10 percent of the semester grade or 10 percent of the total grade, she said.

In addition to teaching at Maryville High School, Jelavich used to be a MAP test grader. She was trained for four days and graded essays for three more. Jelavich has tried to learn the content so she can teach it to her students.

"It was difficult for students to get a top score on the essay portion. They couldn't even show us

an example of a five-point essay," Jelavich said.

MAP tests went from a five-point scale to a four-point scale in English, she said. The teachers were just at the point of being happy with the results and now DESE is changing it again. The change is negative in some ways; however, it will be positive to have end of term tests with incentives, Jelavich said.

"There are more questions than positives. Why would we require a test that we haven't seen? Now we have to align every school's curriculum and put the tests in effect within the next two years," Jelavich said.

TRANS FAT: Campus dining switches to healthier fryer oil

continued from A1

so it's still not on the good list but it is better than it was. Moderation is always the key."

Beacom said the company announced the changes Jan. 1 and that ARAMARK's goal is to switch over all areas by the end of March.

The Northwest campus started switching over by the first week of February, Beacom said. Northwest has been completely trans fat free

since the second week of February.

So far Beacom said campus dining has heard from a variety of sources including faculty, staff and students that they are happy about the switch.

"I think it's great that we did it," Beacom said. "I think it's good that ARAMARK tries to be conscientious of what their customers want and in this case I think they did the right thing."

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See B2 for MIAA brackets and MIAA conference honors



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INSIDE
Northwest Basketball
NW Track, Softball, Baseball
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The Stroller

B2
B3
B4
B5

SPORTS

—MHS GIRLS' BASKETBALL

Girls upset No. 2 Trenton

Maryville pulls off first-round district shocker

By Sam Robinson
Chief Reporter

With March madness on the horizon, the Maryville girls' basketball team is trying on its own glass slipper.

Upon entering districts as the lowest seed, the 5-18 Spoofhounds played the Cinderella role by upsetting second-seeded Trenton (12-12), 54-49, Monday night.

Despite enduring a season with multiple seven-game losing streaks, coach Grant Hageman is seeing his 'Hounds play their best basketball when it counts.

"They could have given up a long time ago when we were 2-18," Hageman said. "It doesn't surprise me with

these girls. Every practice we have is better than the one before. We have improved so much towards the end of the season."

Up 6-5, midway through the first period, the underdog gave the favorite an old school hoops lesson.

The 'Hounds patiently whipped the ball around the frontcourt, finding several close, open looks and out-hustled the Bulldogs in the backcourt, forcing many steals during a 12-0 run.

Maryville's precision offense was in direct contrast to Trenton's new school

offensive strategy of relying almost solely on the 3-pointer.

The second half saw the 'Hounds' 13-point lead diminish when the Bulldogs bombs began to fall. By the fourth quarter, the game was up for grabs.

Freshman Meridee Scott saw the nerves getting to her team as their lead dwindled.

"We played really good, (throughout nervous late)," Scott said. "We just tried to keep it cool."

Scott played it the coolest by sinking two consecutive mid-range jumpers

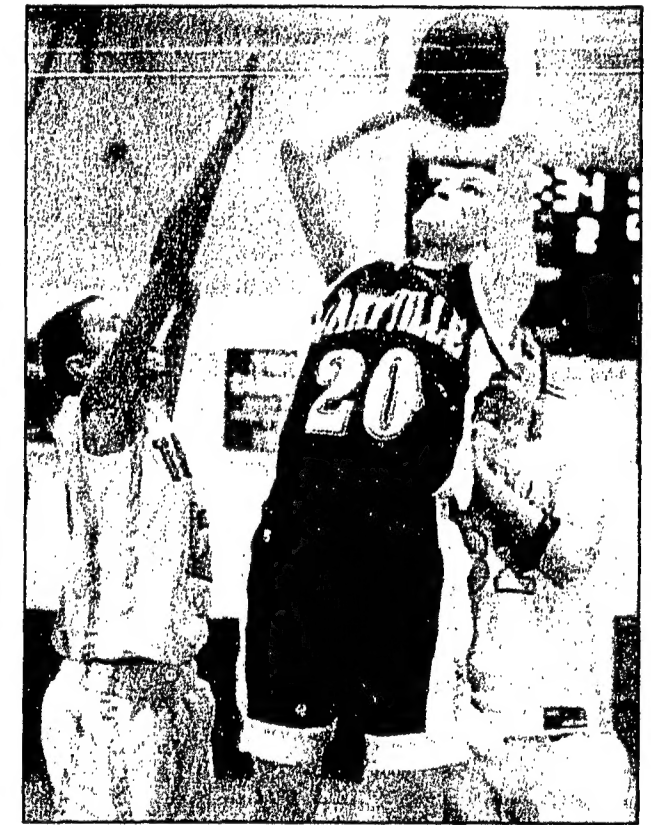
to put Maryville up by six, and sealed a semifinal berth by hitting four free throws in the final two minutes.

"She is a great late-game player because she is a phenomenal free-throw shooter," Hageman said. "As a coach, you almost feel like it's an automatic two points. If she doesn't hit those shots, we probably don't win tonight."

Scott notched a career-high 19 points while senior post player Jaclyn Guess led the charge on the glass by pacing the team in rebounds and scoring all of her 16 points from the paint.

Maryville, now on a three-game winning streak, faced No. 3 seed Brookfield on Wednesday night in the semifinals. (Results not available at press time).

If the Cinderella run continues, the 'Hounds could face top-seeded host school Bishop-LeBlond in the finals at 7 p.m. Friday.



MARYVILLE SPOOFHOUND sophomore Erica Espey aims for the basket against two Trenton defenders during Monday night's game held at Bishop LeBlond High School. Maryville beat Trenton 54-49.

—MIAA CHAMPIONSHIPS

WITHIN REACH

Both teams take on Missouri Southern in the MIAA Conference Tournament



ANDY PETERSON AND LAUREN WILLIAMS
photo by Mike Davis photography editor

Men hope to avoid upset

By Brett Barger
University Sports Editor

After locking up the No. 1 seed in the MIAA tournament, the Northwest men's basketball team sets its sights on not only a tournament championship, but also a No. 1 seed in the South Central Regional.

With Southeastern Oklahoma State holding the No. 1 seed, Northwest and Central Missouri, sitting two and three, respectively, still have a chance to host the regional. Due to lack of hotel space, Southeastern Oklahoma State cannot host the regional, should they retain the top spot. It's widely speculated that whoever lasts longer in the tournament will host the regional.

"We want to win another conference championship. If we take care of business, we have a chance to host regionals," Hunter Henry said. "We want to go down there (Kansas City) and just keep building. Especially our defense."

Defense has been the name of the game as Northwest opens the tournament at noon today against Missouri Southern. The Bearcats finished the regular season allowing the fewest points per game (59.2) and the lowest shooting percentage (.403) in the MIAA. Southern is coming off a win against Missouri Western in a game where both teams needed a win to secure the eighth and final spot in the tournament. Southern owns a 1-1 record against the 'Cats.

see MEN'S on B4



Women face must-win games in tournament

By Call Arnold
Community Sports Editor

A 10-8 record in the MIAA was good enough for the Northwest women to make the conference tournament.

However, one question still remains: Is a 17-10 record overall good enough to make the region?

The MIAA championship this weekend will make that decision. No. 4 Northwest takes on No. 5 Missouri Southern at 2:15 p.m. Friday, at Municipal Auditorium in Kansas City.

Northwest head coach Gene Steinmeyer said his prediction of a 5-2 record through the month of February came true, but it could have been better to help secure a spot in the postseason tournament.

"It wasn't perfect. Six-and-one would have locked us into the region, but it was good enough to keep us around," Steinmeyer said. "You never know what the committee's thinking, but in my mind we're really one win away from having a great chance of making the region."

As of press time, Northwest was ranked No. 8 in the South Central region. MIAA opponents Missouri Western, Washburn and Emporia State were ranked No. 1, 3 and 4, respectively. Sixty-four teams will advance to the Division II championships, with the conference tournament champions receiving automatic bids.

see WOMEN'S on B4

—BY THE NUMBERS

#1

Men's seed in tournament

#4

Women's seed in tournament

16

Straight conference tournaments for men

5

Straight conference tournaments for women

6

Northwest athletes to win postseason MIAA honors

—MHS BASKETBALL

'Hounds fall short in finale



MARYVILLE SPOOFHOUND Adam Mattson does his best to gain control of the ball against Plattburg's Taylor Davis during Tuesday's game. The Tigers defeated the 'Hounds 55-44.

By Scott Levine
Asst. Sports Editor

Holding a 15-6 first quarter lead, Plattburg seemed poised for an easy first round district victory over the Maryville boys' basketball team. However, the 'Hounds had a different plan.

Maryville entered the halftime break with a three-point advantage before surrendering the lead for good in the third quarter as Plattburg advanced with a 55-44 victory. The Tigers square off against Bishop LeBlond, Thursday, in St. Joseph.

'Hounds head coach Mike Kuwitzky seemed pleased with the team's comeback.

"I thought we did a great job of coming back," Kuwitzky said. "We were a little nervous in the first quarter, but then (Plattburg) started missing some shots and we got some breaks."

After Andy Walter drained a 3-pointer 45 seconds into the game, the 'Hounds went scoreless for almost seven minutes. During that period, the Tigers' frantic pressure helped tally a 15-0 run.

Senior Dequince Atkinson netted seven points during the run, with six of these points spanned over a minute.

"We were prepared well, but (Plattburg's) fast break really hurt us," Kuwitzky said. "I thought we contained Atkinson well, but when he gets into the open court, it's hard to stop him."

Atkinson, along with fellow senior Ryan Green, got into early foul trouble limiting their involvement in the second quarter.

see BOYS on B2

Tired of eating 'Cold Pizza'

As my morning begins, I can't help but turn on my favorite entertainment medium — the TV. Like many of you, my eyes fixate on one channel, ESPN.



Scott Levine
Staff Sports Editor

No, it's not the show I loathe, but one distinct individual.

Skip Bayless. That's right. The skinny, pointy-nosed, me-against-the-world columnist featured on the show's "1st and 10" portion.

This man obviously has no friends and doesn't seem to mind. He consistently believes that athletes should have stipulations in their contracts forbidding them to go out.

Just because you don't have any friends, doesn't mean you have to ruin everyone else's lives. Skip, Mr. Me-against-the-world is most likely upset because he was only good enough to become his high school team's waterboy.

Picture Skip as an impressionable teenager at his local high school. Most likely he's sitting at the lunch table by himself plotting revenge against every member of the football team.

This revenge plot has Skip convinced he knows what athletes are thinking. Just like when he accused Troy Aikman of being gay. (This, like many other Bayless comments, was a baseless lie).

But Aikman isn't Bayless's only target. Every day during the fall, Bayless has a familiar mission.

Granted, Owens is pretty much a prima donna, but Skip only fuels the fire. He hates these people so much, that he makes outrageous remarks about them and pretends to know what goes through their minds.

Then, during the winter, Bayless loves to claim the NBA's supremacy over college basketball. This couldn't be farther from the truth with the NBA's low ratings, but he also states that only major conference teams should be allowed in a 128-team tournament.

That's right, 128 teams from the major conferences. I'm not that good at math, but I don't believe the major conferences could even fill a tournament that big.

Bayless, a self-proclaimed NBA expert, thinks LeBron

James is a mediocre player. Yes, the same LeBron James that has reached the All-Star game since he was 19 and is only 22.

James may not be the superstar able to take over a game in the fourth quarter, but he's only a pup. But Bayless refuses to acknowledge this fact.

And what if James lives up to his King James persona? What will Skip say then? He'll probably still cling to his original thought.

Even if James becomes the greatest thing since sliced bread, Bayless will probably point out how he has outstanding teammates. Even better, he'll probably say the rest of the league conspired with David Stern in allowing James to become a star to boost ratings.

Now Skip isn't a cold, heartless human being all the time, though. There are some people he actually likes, and he lets everyone know about it, on every show.

One of those few bestowed with Skip's blessing is Denver's Jay Cutler. Skip, a graduate of Vanderbilt, loves the Commodores' only true athlete.

He claimed Cutler should have been the first draft pick for the Houston Texans during last year's NFL draft. Bayless showed his true journalistic integrity by showing no favoritism toward his alma mater's quarterback. Of course, he claimed Cutler is better than Rookie of the Year Vince Young, and Heisman trophy winners, Matt Leinart and Reggie Bush.

So now because of Bayless, I want to see Cutler join the likes of Akili Smith, Ryan Leaf and Rick Mirer. Cutler would be just another run-of-the-mill quarterback who I never liked or disliked, but because of Bayless's persistent praise, I want him to fail.

Not because I don't like him, but because I want to see what Bayless says. Most likely he'll pawn it off on other people, but seeing Skip squirm would be nice.

For now, Skip will continue to grace the 'Cold Pizza' studios and make a mockery of the show. Hopefully for me, however, is that I can train my thumb to resist my morning obsession with 'Cold Pizza.'

Steinmeyer said the last game for

—NW TENNIS

Tennis heads to Topeka

By Ashley Lovely
Missourian Reporter

After the Northwest men's and women's tennis teams qualified for NCAA Regionals, won regionals and went to nationals last year, some would think that both teams would be content with what they have achieved.

Not these Bearcats. "It's tough to improve on a year like last year," head coach Mark Rosewell said. "But we have some high goals to fulfill; we want to win conference, qualify for regionals and of course make it back to nationals."

Although the men's team is returning four of their six starters, the women's team cannot say the same. After losing their No. 1 and No. 2 seeds, the women are learning to play with a young and inexperienced team, sophomore Emily Lindsay said.

"We have four girls returning

from last year's seven who have had a lot of success," Lindsay said. "The younger girls are good players, they just lack experience. If we can show confidence and stay close knit, we will have success."

Rosewell said that although his women seem to have confidence in their lack of playing time and age, there is no substitute for experience.

"The goals we have set for our girls are so high, and with such a young team, it will be an interesting season. We will just have to go from here and do our best," Rosewell said.

To reach the goals that both the men and women have set, senior men's player Pablo Acebedo said throughout the majority of the off-season the 'Cats worked on their doubles game.

"We lost to Washburn last year in the conference game because of our double's matches," Acebedo said. "Luckily, we were able to leave that loss behind and make it on to nation-

als. This year we just don't want that to happen again."

Another thing both teams worked on was their mental stability and toughness. Just like any other sport, mental toughness is important, but sophomore Lina Gomez said tennis is a little different.

"Tennis is a game that leaves everything to the individual," Gomez said. "You can make things pretty hard on yourself."

As the 'Cats head into a new season, with success behind their racquets and a new and improved attitude in front of them, both teams are ready to see what the future has in store.

Northwest heads to Topeka, Kan., this weekend to play in the RMAC/MIAA Invitational tournament against Metropolitan State, Colorado State-Pueblo, Mesa State and Winona State.

"This tournament should not be a big deal because we are playing against weak teams just to get us back in shape," Acebedo said. "It's kind of like a real practice game."

MEN'S: Northwest marches toward tourney championship

continued from B1

Southern defeated Northwest, 59-57, Jan. 10. The 'Cats later rebounded from that 25-turnover loss to hand the Lions a 75-60 loss at Bearcat Arena, Feb. 17.

Northwest coach Steve Tappmeyer said the convincing win over Southern does not make the first round an easy one.

"Southern is going to be coming in an extremely hungry team. They have proven they can beat us," Tappmeyer said.

Should Northwest advance, they play the winner of the Southwest Baptist-Pittsburg State game, which will be played immediately following Northwest and Southern. The second round could potentially be a trap game for the 'Cats. Against Baptist, Northwest overcame a 16-point deficit to take the conference opener, 81-80, and

edged the purple Bearcats by five at Bearcat Arena.

Pittsburg State was a different story. Northwest beat Pitt State by five at home, but then were pounded on the road, 74-56. Northwest must take care of the ball and rebound. In Northwest's five losses this season, they averaged 15 turnovers and were outrebounded, 201-164, with Central and Pitt State doing much of the damage.

Now that Northwest has shared a conference championship and took three out of the MIAA's four end of season awards, Victor James said it adds a little more pressure to the team.

"The fact we got a conference championship puts a bulls eye on our back for everybody. No. 1 seed presents a big bulls eye, but I think we can respond to it," James said.

PAINFUL MEMORY



NORTHWEST PLAYERS Lauren Williams, Mogan Brue, and Jessica Burton (left to right) watch the clock as the final minutes tick away in the game against Missouri Western held at the Missouri Western Field House. The Bearcats lost to the Griffins 77-58.

WOMEN'S: Hoping for tournament wins for regional bid

continued from B1

Northwest won both battles against Missouri Southern in the regular season, with a 66-61 victory in Joplin on Jan. 10, and a 62-51 defeat in Bearcat Arena Feb. 17. Southern is coming off a 75-69 upset over Missouri Western Saturday, while the 'Cats are trying to continue their hot shooting after a 94-77 victory over Fort Hays State. The 14 three-pointers made set a school record for Northwest, with six coming from senior Katie O'Grady, who had a career and game-high 24 points.

Steinmeyer said the last game for

both teams will make no difference in the game about to be played.

"There's not going to be a single thing that happened a week ago that's relevant here," Steinmeyer said.

Junior forward Lauren Williams, a member of the MIAA All-Defensive team announced Tuesday, said her team realizes they are again facing a must-win situation against Southern. "Every time we play we just absolutely have to win," Williams said. "We have to win this one. I feel really confident going into it."

She agreed with Steinmeyer, saying Southern's win against Western was impressive, but believes the 'Cats

match up well against the Lions.

Junior guard Kelli Nelson knows the game against Southern will be hard, but is also looking forward to the chance to play in the tournament.

"We're just going to take one game at a time," Nelson said. "We beat them (Southern) twice, but the third time's always the hardest, but we're definitely capable but we really really want it and we need it."

Williams said rebounding and good defense were the keys to both victories against Southern earlier this season, but hopes the offense from Saturday's game will carry over into this weekend.

The winner of the Friday's game will advance to play either No. 1 Missouri Western or No. 8 Pittsburg State Saturday. Steinmeyer is confident Western will prevail, and said another rematch against the Griffins would provide a great atmosphere. He also said if the Northwest men advance into the tournament, it would help attract more Bearcat fans to Kansas City for support of both the men and the women.

Should Northwest defeat Southern on Friday, they will advance to play at 6 p.m. Saturday. The championship game will be at 3:15 p.m., Sunday.

BOYS': Comeback stalled in second half

continued from B1

The 'Hounds were able to capitalize after scoring six first quarter points.

Plattsburg head coach Dave Kopp said losing those two seniors hurt his team.

"It really slows us down in transition," Kopp said about having Green and Atkinson in foul trouble. "Atkinson can score inside and outside, and Green gets our team under control. We missed them both."

Walter kept Maryville within striking distance after draining a trey with 7:06 remaining. Walter tallied the 'Hounds first 10 points.

After the 3-pointer, Walter drew a charge on the defensive end, giving way for a furious Maryville rally.

The 'Hounds registered 17 of the game's next 21 points over a seven minute span. Aaron Ducker's second 3-pointer of the quarter gave Maryville a 27-24 halftime lead.

Ducker recorded four 3-pointers, while Walter finished with 20 points.

"We got aggressive in the second quarter," Kuwitzky said. "We ran our offense and we calmed down." Maryville built a 31-26 third quarter lead, but it evaporated as the Tigers tallied an 8-0 run. Plattsburg held the 'Hounds scoreless for over three minutes, before Ryan Sudhoff nailed a basket cutting the deficit to one point with 1:17 left.

However, Plattsburg produced another run to start the fourth quarter. The Tigers fast break offense manufactured a 10-0 run over the quarter's first three minutes.

"I don't think we were tired," Kuwitzky said. "We were in shape, but we started to turn the ball over again. We had good shots, but we started missing them."

Maryville senior John Hart scored eight points, while Atkinson recorded a game-high 22 points. Hart, along with Blake Jensen and Joel Driskell, are the lone seniors on Maryville's roster.

"It is time for our team to regroup and we'll evaluate each individual player for next year," Kuwitzky said. "We'll start looking ahead right away."

The 'Hounds finished the season 8-16, while Plattsburg improved to 17-9.

—HOROSCOPES

Today's Birthday (03-01-07)

One good idea leads to another this year, you can rely on that. You'll soon be building and developing money-making concepts. Set up a framework for yourself that guarantees a nice profit.

To get the advantage, check the day's rating: 10 is the easiest day, 0 the most challenging.

Aries (March 21-April 19)

Today is a 6 — You're getting luckier. Don't let this news interfere with your critical thinking. Winning isn't the only thing. How you play the game matters, too.

Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Today is a 7 — You have a talent for building monuments. Construct a legacy your family can rely upon for generations.

Gemini (May 21-June 21)

Today is a 7 — You're looking good, but don't relax. There'll be another tough question. No flirting, drinking or wild giggling fits until after the gig is over.

Cancer (June 22-July 22)

Today is an 8 — You have the natural ability to do very well in business. This serves you in whatever you do. You can manage both time and money.

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22)

Today is a 6 — A difficult task is nearing completion, and that's a wonderful thing. Don't let this event go by unnoticed. Plan a celebration for tomorrow.

Virgo (Aug. 23-Sept. 22)

Today is a 5 — Not only do you have to get the job done yesterday, but the requirements keep changing, too. Luckily, you do well under pressure. Keep telling yourself that.

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 22)

Today is a 7 — Your friends provide lots more than a few good jokes. They strengthen your resolve, improve your confidence and tease you into action. You've got to love them for it.

Scorpio (Oct. 23-Nov. 21)

Today is an 8 — You're very good at keeping secrets, so do that again. Don't let anybody know who's really in charge. Put up a figurehead.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22-Dec. 21)

Today is a 7 — More research is required. Hit the books or the Internet. Several new questions have popped up, and you can find the answers.

Capricorn (Dec. 22-Jan. 19)

Today is a 7 — Better figure out what you've made, and what you've spent recently. This is one of those jobs that you're better off doing yourself.

Aquarius (Jan. 20-Feb. 18)

Today is a 7 — Others seek your advice, and well they should, since you're so smart. Listen to their ideas, too, and you'll prove it conclusively.

Pisces (Feb. 19-March 20)

Today is a 7 — It's perfectly natural to go over your decision in your mind. Don't worry, you can make adaptations as you go along, if you like.

—STROLLER

Your Man snubs pre-Oscars



Even though Your Man is called The Stroller (and rightly so), there is one place I have never strolled, and probably will never stroll, even if given the opportunity: the red carpet at the Academy Awards.

Don't get me wrong; I'd love to be one of those reporters or photographers doing their thing 5 feet away from Hollywood's "finest." But there's something about the quality of journalism (or rather, the lack thereof) during the red carpet show that makes me downright nauseous.

Perhaps you've heard the expression, "It ain't easy being 'cheesy.'" Well, for these "journalists," that host the arrival shows, cheesy practically comes as second nature.

They started off every single interview by saying how "stunning" and "fabulous" their interviewee looked. Give me a break. We're not blind, we can decide for ourselves how classy or trashy their tuxedos, suits and dresses are.

And on top of that, the actual questions the hosts asked were simply ridiculous. You didn't have to frequent Wells Hall to understand these broadcasters were doing it all wrong.

For example, one of the hosts pulled aside Nicole Kidman and Naomi Watts. The two are good friends, apparently, and this woman literally asks them, "Which one of you takes the longest to get ready?"

You should've seen the look on Naomi's face as she quickly answered back, "We've never gotten ready together."

Then there were the "how do you feel" questions. These just about sent me through the roof. You work hard, your whole career to get to cover the red carpet arrivals, live, just happen to catch a big star like Will Smith for some quick questions and then, at your big moment, drop this bomb.

—DYD REVIEW

'Half Nelson' is all good

By James Evans
Missourian reporter

Half of the films nominated for Oscars don't seem to make it into American theaters these days. What does that say about the mainstream movie industry?

Despite being almost completely unseen, "Half Nelson" gained nominations from almost every film awards association in America this year. It deserved the attention.

The film stars Ryan Gosling ("The Notebook") as a troubled teacher of eighth grade students at an inner city school. It has been Gosling's performance that has received the most praise, including an Oscar nomination for best actor.

He plays Daniel Dunne, a 20-something, white, history teacher in a school attended predominantly by black students. Highly idealistic, he spends much of his class periods teaching history in a preaching, stream-of-thought method.

The character badly wants his students to care. He pushes them to better themselves and not fall victim to their impoverished and forgotten environment.

There's just one problem. Dunne doesn't care much himself. Despite his lecturing, he's in a bit of a rut himself. He smokes crack and snorts cocaine on a regular basis.

Convinced that his drug use just to gets him by, Dunne doesn't see himself as dependent. However, that theory comes crashing down. One evening, after coaching a middle school basketball game, he is discovered smoking crack in the girls' bathroom by a student.

The student, Dre, is played by Shareeka Epps (15 years old during the movie's filming). Epps, like Gosling, received rave reviews and award nominations for her portrayal of a tough and brutally honest tomboy who knows plenty about how drugs can affect lives.

The teacher and the student begin to form a very close bond that could be beneficial for both

"How did you feel when you heard you were nominated for an award tonight?" What are you expecting these stars to say? Like crap? Furious? Perplexed? No! Of course they're going to give a positive response. Come on now! Get them to tell us something we don't know.

I changed channels. I just couldn't take it the sugarcoating and stupidity any longer.

Once the awards finally began, I thought all was over. Wrong! Turns out they kept one of the red carpet guys around to give reports from backstage right before every single commercial break.

It was a total idiotic waste of airtime. I mean, Ellen DeGeneres (who was, I thought, hilarious) could've done 10 more jokes in the time it took this guy to make these absolutely retarded, inaccurate predictions about who was going to win some of the big awards. Then, in true cheesiness, he had to add in little cliché sign-offs, like "The stars are ready, the presenters are ready and even the Golden Oscars are ready!"

What is this, the Academy Awards or the Westminster Kennel Club Dog Show?

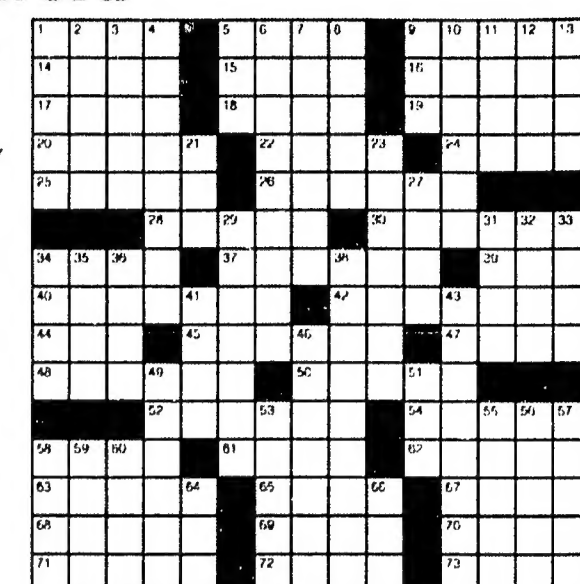
Honestly, why do they need this extra, pre-show stuff? Why is it so important that we interview celebrities walking 50 feet from their stretch SUVs to the door, when we already know what they're going to say? And there are enough shots of these people during the ceremony; there's really no urgent need to see what they're going to be wearing the entire night.

ABC, E!, the TV Guide Channel, Animal Planet and all the other channels that overdose on pre-Oscars coverage every year need to back it down a few notches. For a show that only lasts a few hours, we do not need a few months' worth of specials and speculation.

Simply put, Your Man recommends cut the fluff; let's get to the good stuff.

Crossword

ACROSS
1 Comic Imogene
5 Flows out
9 Employment
14 Install, as
15 Order to a broker
16 More kind
17 Surrounded by
18 Guilty or not
19 Guilty
20 Bing
21 Evil characters
22 Division word
24 Brooding place
25 Gave off bright
26 Channel
27 Gertrude
28 Was the
29 Designated one
30 Element 53
34 Irony has
37 Individual
39 Actor Beatty
40 Flicker of light
42 Freed of
43 Obsessions
44 Firearm
45 Guarantee
46 Extremely
47 Tranquilize
50 American of
51 Japanese
52 Rivulet
53 Billards stroke
54 Depress
61 Lose traction
62 Editor's marks
63 Before, before
65 Mine entrance
67 Pupil setting
68 Hapton once
69 Billard fillers
70 Eyeball
71 Impolitely
72 Other side
73 Advantage
74 New Jersey
75 NBA team



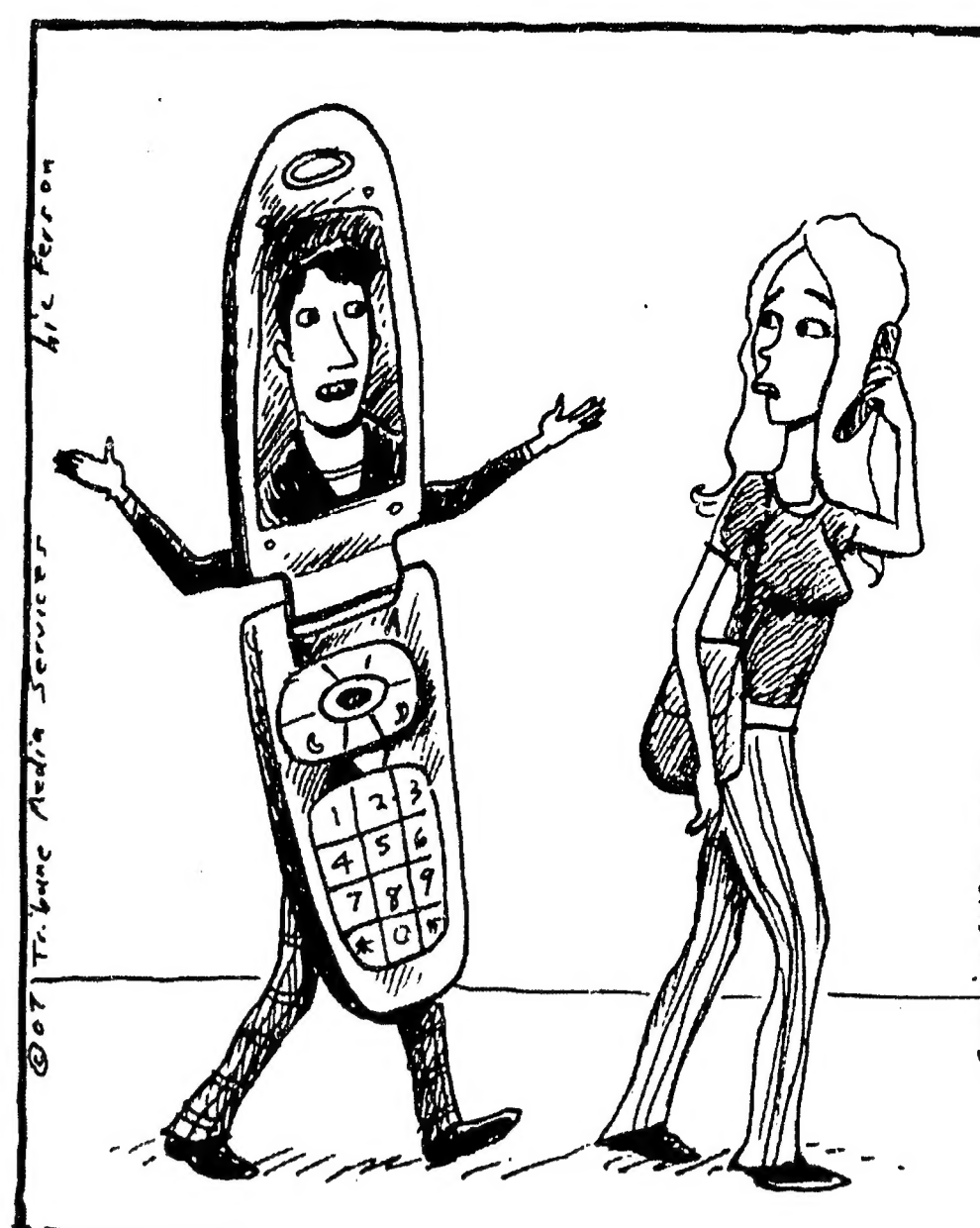
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4 Addition to a
5 6th sense
6 Those with faith
7 Kitchen device
8 Roofing material
9 One in Toledo
10 Inland
11 Farmland parcel
12 Turns right
13 Before, before
21 "Famphlet" ending?
23 Baltimore's
24 Bird
27 Solitary
28 Jacks or better
31 Memo heading
32 —do-well
33 Countercurrent
34 Ova
35 Mystery board-
game
36 Peel
37 Cutting corners
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48 Solo

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59 Clare Booth or Henry
60 Endavor
64 Endeavor
66 Either part of a
67

—CARTOON



"Hey, Lisa!" I had myself surgically transformed into your favorite thing! Now will you talk to me?"

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The skinny on fad dieting



Popular diets can wreak havoc on your health; health officials say diet, exercise better choice for long-term weight loss success

By Lindsay Jacobs, Tara Adkins
Asst. Features Editor, Features Editor

Her attempts at weight loss began a couple years ago.

She has tried three times, but all three times it failed. The next time she tries she vows to make it work.

Senior Jessica Hartley has lost as much as 30 pounds on the Atkins Diet, but blames her lack of will power and of food choices for not following through.

Many fad diets have been under the spotlight for the past few years, but almost all come with a catch and prove ineffective for long-term weight loss. According to Familydoctor.org, a fad diet is a diet that promises quick results, but they don't offer success and they aren't healthy to follow.

Jenell Ciak, assistant professor in the family consumer science department, recommends people change their lifestyle instead of trying fad diets because when a fad diet fails a person goes back to their old routine and gains the weight back.

The Atkins Diet, one of the most well-known fad diet, is based on four phases and it eliminates carbohydrates and increases protein intake, according to Atkins.com.

Atkins made her body change during the first few weeks, Hartley said.

"It's kind of like a diet boot camp, you are on a very strict, really low carb thing (diet) for two weeks, and it completely changes your body around," she said.

When she gets off the diet, and starts consuming carbs again, she described feeling like "crap."

Besides the physical discomfort, she described the emotional discomfort involved in leaving the diet as upsetting and regretful.

"I feel like I failed, like I don't have any will power," Hartley said. "I think it leads to a moment of depression."

There are several dangers to fad diets, but there are recommendations on how to safely take the weight off.

One of the dangers of fad dieting is "cycling through" diets, being on and off diets, according to Myfooddiary.com, an online weight loss resource. Not staying on diets causes low self-esteem, a negative body image, frustration, cravings, binges, weight gain and a decreased metabolism, according to the Web site.

The site recommends "slow and steady" is the best way to lose weight by making changes to your lifestyle.

Hartley decided to try Atkins after she watched a friend who was on it lose weight. It would be easier for her to follow since there is no calorie or point counting.

MyPyramid.gov is a site that allows people to put their information in so they can construct a personal Food Pyramid. It shows a person a food plan to follow, if the plan is followed there will be weight loss. It also tracks physical activity and food intake and offers an assessment.

On average it is recommended people consume 2,000 calories, but Ciak said people should consider the rate of the metabolism and their size. She people should consume roughly 10 times their body weight.

Hartley wouldn't recommend someone only wanting to lose a few pounds to get on the Atkins diet, and she does not plan to make Atkins part of her lifestyle.

Instead, after reaching a certain weight she plans to switch to the South Beach Diet or a similar diet. The South Beach Diet is similar to Atkins, but instead of eliminating carbs completely, the dieter learns how to incorporate good carbs and fats in their diet, according to Southbeach.com.

However, Hartley plans to give Atkins one last shot. Diet pills are another quick fix weight loss solution. If taken they can cause restlessness, hypertension, insomnia, an irregular heartbeat and anxiety, according to Myfooddiary.com.

Although the FDA isn't obligated to approve diet pills, it is up to the manufacturer to make sure they are safe, according to FDA.gov

Instead of trying a so-called fad diet some people find suc-

cess in watching their portions, and regularly exercising.

Last April, Maryville resident Janara Sims began monitoring her portions and working out. To date she has lost 43 pounds, 11 percent of body mass and 22 inches.

A while ago she tried Weight Watchers in Chillicothe, Mo., but instead decided to watch what she eats and portion sizes.

"We all get caught up in dieting and if you don't change your life, you're going to go right back to doing what you've always done," Sims said.

Her goal is to lose 50 pounds, but she still has some inches to lose and toning to do, Sims said.

Sims also works out two times a day, four times a week. She had a personal trainer for the first few months.

"They tell you working out will give you more energy, and at first you're like 'yeah right,' but the longer you do it, you feel like you're doing more," Sims said.

Before she began her cholesterol was 250, and it is now at 196, and her blood pressure has also dropped.

"I turned 30, and I figured I was too young to be that unhealthy, and I want to be around for my two children," Sims said.

Sims is the leader in points in the Sound Hound Program, a Maryville School District-wide wellness program. Participants receive points for exercising, wearing a seat belt, eating healthy, drinking six to eight glasses of water a day and getting a yearly dentist check up and a regular blood pressure check. The program started Feb. 19 and goes through April 12.

Many people have been inspired by her healthier approach to weight loss, Sims said.

"People say I've motivated them to exercise and eat better, and that keeps me motivated," Sims said.